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Institute of Psychology and Physiology in England, have been carried on for three years by the United States Public Health Service, during the past year under the general supervision of Senior Physiologist (R) Frederic S. Lee.

The following are some of the questions with which these investigations have been concerned: Comparison of maintenance of output in 8-hour and 10-hour plants, and day and night shifts; artificial limitation of output; the influences of speed of production and fatigue in accident causation; the effect of rest periods in 8-hour and 10-hour plants; fatigue studies; the measurement of fatigue; the importance of rhythm in industry in relieving fatigue; muscular tonus in relation to fatigue; chemical phenomena of fatigue; vascular skin reaction tests; muscle tests; standard strengths; etc.

All these studies have a direct bearing on the health and comfort of the worker and, consequently, upon industrial economics. This latter bearing is becoming duly recognized by many factories, which have established what may be called "departments of industrial physiology." The first step of this kind undertaken by an industrial establishment in this country was the direct outcome of the work of the Public Health Service.

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### **PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE FOR WIDOWED, DESERTED, AND UNMARRIED MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN IN ENGLAND.<sup>1</sup>**

The wonderful results achieved in child conservation in England have been due in large part to a system of Government subsidization. In a recent report by the medical officer of health of St. Pancras, certain powers of local councils in making provision of assistance for widowed, deserted, and unmarried mothers and their children, under regulations made by the Local Government Board (now the Ministry of Health), are set forth. The Ministry of Health will pay grants to local authorities and others, as a rule at the rate of one-half of expenditure incurred with the Ministry's approval, for the following purposes:

"Expenses of crèches and day nurseries and of other arrangements for attending to the health of children under five years of age whose mothers go out to work;

The provision of homes and other arrangements for attending to the health of children of widowed, deserted, and unmarried mothers, under five years of age; and

Experimental work for the health of expectant and nursing mothers and of children under five years of age, carried out by local authorities or voluntary agencies with the approval of the board."

In a circular accompanying the regulations is the following instructive statement:

"The health of infants and young children who lack the support of a father often needs special attention, and it is on all grounds desirable

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<sup>1</sup> From a report by T. Shadwick Higgins, medical officer of health, St. Pancras. *The Medical Officer*, London, January, 1920.

that the mother and child should be kept together in such cases, especially during the first year. It is notorious that the death-rate of illegitimate infants, the only infants in this category for whom separate statistics are published, is about twice the death rate of legitimate infants. \* \* \* The board have therefore obtained the treasury assent to the extension of the grant to homes at which mothers and children can be kept together in certain cases, and to such other arrangements as the board may approve for attending to the health of the children under consideration. In some cases it may be desirable to pay a good foster-mother to look after a child whose mother can not afford the whole of its keep, or to assist the mother to stay at home to attend to the child. Any scheme for the purpose should be submitted for the board's approval before expenditure is incurred on it, if a grant is desired."

The powers of the borough council are limited to children under five years of age, although the problem by no means ends with children of this age. The desirability of keeping a mother and child together whenever possible is considered of the highest importance, and "the preservation and exercise of the maternal affection should be aimed at for the future welfare and happiness both of the mother and child." This in the majority of cases may be effected by one or more of the following measures:

(1) The maintenance of the child in a home (such as the guardians' at Leavesden), where the mother and the child must be parted.

(2) Entrusting the child to a foster mother, approved and subject to supervision, the mother living in the same house or elsewhere.

(3) The provision of a day nursery, where the child would be cared for by day while the mother was at work, the child being taken home by the mother every evening or dealt with as indicated under (4).

(4) The provision of a hostel for mothers where they can be sent after the lying-in, the babies being cared for in a day nursery on or near the premises while the mother is at work, and by the mother in the hostel at night and other times.

(5) The making of a money allowance to those mothers who are able to keep their children satisfactorily at home, but whose earnings are insufficient to do so without assistance.

(1) Children's Homes: Wherever public accommodations are available, it should be unnecessary for borough councils themselves to provide an institution. However, when necessary, the extension of the arrangement to other authorities and bodies providing suitable homes, or a direct provision of the homes by the council, should be considered.

(2) Foster-Mothers: The difficulty of finding suitable foster mothers has been largely due to the inability of mothers to offer sufficient

financial inducement to foster mothers. A system is recommended whereby the local council may augment mothers' payments, provided the foster mothers are approved and kept under regular supervision by the authorities, which would probably meet a number of cases where it was not possible or desirable for the mother to live with the child. It was suggested also that in some instances mothers might also lodge with the foster mothers.

(3) Day Nurseries: In accepting the responsibility for fatherless children, additional day-nursery facilities, as a rule, have been found necessary. A successful precedent has been observed in subsidizing existing day nurseries, on condition that they comply with certain specified requirements and receive as far as possible the children referred to them by the local authorities. At the present time they receive a 50 per cent grant from the Ministry of Health upon the deficit on the approved expenditure after the deduction of payment made by the mothers.

With regard to voluntary day nurseries the report recommends a proportional subsidy on their whole work, rather than the making of payments for certain cases referred to them and not for others. On this basis it is recommended that the payment of grants equal one-half of those paid by the General Government. The total approved expenditure therefore would be met one-half by the Government and one-fourth each by the local authorities and the voluntary funds of the institution.

(4) Hostels for Mothers: There is a need for hostels for mothers in connection with the day nurseries, both for unmarried mothers who have just completed their lying-in and have to make their plans for facing the world, and for mothers who, while they have to leave their children when they are at work during the day, are able to join them again in the evening, and yet have no home to go to. A properly managed hostel would doubtless help many such mothers to retrieve their characters by shielding them from the dangers presented by a return to the conditions under which they have fallen.

(5) Payments to Mothers: In regard to payment of direct money grants to mothers who, but for lack of means, could keep their children at home, would, in suitable cases, probably be a more economical way of dealing with the mother than by institutions.

The fathers of motherless children often find very serious difficulty in getting them properly cared for, and any scheme adopted in the case of widowed, deserted, and unmarried mothers, would no doubt be found useful in dealing with such cases.

In the opinion of the writer this work should be regarded as an essential part of maternity and child welfare, and in harmony with the policy of concentrating in the hands of a central local authority on matters which directly affect the public health.

Applications for relief should be considered in regard to each case from the standpoint of the particular form in which assistance should be given, its duration, the payments which the mother should be required to make, and the steps which should be taken to require an adequate payment by the father.

Estimates: During the years 1918, 1917, 1916, 1915, and 1914 the number of illegitimate births that were notified in St. Pancras were 314, 275, 318, 256, and 230, respectively. Probably only a part of these would have applied for assistance. On the assumption that 100 cases came up for consideration in the first year of the scheme, and that 50 of them were dealt with through Leavesden or foster mothers, 22 by day nurseries only, 12 at a hostel, and 16 by subsidization, the cost might be estimated as follows (apart from initial equipment):

	Pounds per annum.
50 children at 18s. a week (the Leavesden figure).....	2,340
Annual cost of hostel for 12 mothers.....	1,000
Gross annual subsidy to the four day nurseries.....	1,265
16 mothers subsidized at 6s. a week.....	250
	<hr/> 4,855

If the women paid half the cost of the first two items, a sum of 1,670 pounds could be deducted, leaving an expenditure of 3,185 pounds. The deduction of a 50 per cent government grant (subject to approval) then leaves a total cost to the rates of about 1,600 pounds for the year.

The report concludes with the statement that a state system of mothers' pensions for all mothers, married or unmarried, who lack the support of a husband, and are in need, would greatly lessen the provision which the local council would be required to make along the lines indicated in the report. In other words, that the system of mothers' pensions is desirable.

### **DIVISION OF VENEREAL DISEASES, MARCH, 1920.**

The accompanying table shows that during the month of March, 1920, 23,573 cases of venereal diseases were reported to the State boards of health by physicians, clinicians, hospital superintendents, etc., and that there were 9,260 new admissions to the clinics operating under the joint control of the United States Public Health Service and the State boards of health.

There were 26,395 doses of arsphenamine administered during the the month.

Six States have not submitted reports.